

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 EA-07 FRB-03 INR-07 IO-11 NEA-10 NSAE-00

OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

SS-15 NSC-05 /096 W

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P R 051927Z FEB 76

FM USMISSION OECD PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASH DC PRIORITY 0496

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, OECD

SUBJECT: DATES FOR OECD MINISTERIAL

1. UK OECD PERM REP GALLAGHER CALLED ON AMBASSADOR FEBRUARY 5 TO CONVEY LATEST UK THINKING ON TIMING OF OECD MINISTERIAL.
2. GALLAGHER SAID FONSEC CALLAGHAN HAS LONG-STANDING COMMITMENT TO VISIT THREE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES JUNE 8-10. THUS, SCHEDULING OF MINISTERIAL DURING THIS TIME FRAME WILL CREATE PROBLEMS FOR HIM AND FOR THE SCANDINAVIAN MINISTERS WHO ARE HIS HOSTS. HOWEVER, HMG RECOGNIZES GREAT IMPORTANCE OF HAVING SECRETARY KISSINGER ATTEND MEETING AND THEREFORE WISHES TO KNOW IF IT WOULD BE "CONVENIENT" FOR SECRETARY TO SUPPORT CHANGING OECD MINISTERIAL DATES TO JUNE 15-17. IF THIS NOT POSSIBLE, THEN CALLAGHAN WILL SEE IF DATES FOR HIS SCANDINAVIAN VISIT CAN BE REVISED. UK WOULD BE APPRECIATIVE HOWEVER, IF SECRETARY WAS ABLE TO REVISE HIS SCHEDULE BECAUSE OF LONG-STANDING NATURE OF SCANDINAVIAN INVITATIONS.

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3. GALLAGHER SAID CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER HEALEY IS FREE ON EITHER SET OF DATES. UK IS DESIROUS OF MAINTAINING LAST YEAR'S FORMULA (FIRST DAY FOREIGN MINISTERS AND SECOND DAY FINANCE MINISTERS) WHICH THEY THOUGHT WORKED QUITE WELL.

4. GALLAGHER SAID HE WAS ACCOMPANYING SEC GEN VAN LENNEP TO LONDON ON MONDAY NOON WHERE SEC GEN AND HEATH ARE SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS THE PILGRIMS. THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A MEETING OF VAN LENNEP WITH SENIOR UK GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. SINCE THE DATES OF THE MINISTERIAL WILL INEVITABLY COME UP DURING HIS VISIT, ANY WASHINGTON REACTION TO THE ABOVE UK PROPOSALS WOULD BE MOST APPRECIATED ASAP.

AT LUNCHEON MEETING TODAY WITH SECRETARY-GENERAL AND HEADS OF DEL FROM G-7 COUNTRIES, THE SUBJECT OF MINISTERIAL MEETING AND UK DESIRE FOR ONE WEEK DELAY WAS AGAIN RAISED BY VAN LENNEP. SEC-GEN MENTIONED POSSIBLE CONFLICT WEEK OF JUNE 13 FOR SECRETARY SIMON AND POSSIBLY OTHER FINANCE MINISTERS AT MEETING IN SAN FRANCISCO, WHICH SIMON IS REPORTEDLY SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS. ANOTHER POSSIBLE PROBLEM IS PROPOSED DATE OF OFFICIAL-LEVEL CIEC MEETING TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED THAT WEEK WHICH WAS RAISED BY CANADIAN AMBASSADOR. VAN LENNEP ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED NO COMPLAINTS TO DATE FROM THE SCANDANAVIAN COUNTRIES CONCERNING DIFFICULTY WITH THE 9TH-10TH DUE TO CALLAGHAN VISIT. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE WAS NO STATED SUPPORT FOR CHANGE OF DATES TO WEEK OF 13TH. ALTHOUGH OTHERS PRESENT AGREED TO CHECK OUT WITH CAPITOLS THE CHANGE PROPOSED BY BRITISH, THERE SEEMED TO BE GENERAL PREFERENCE FOR LEAVING MINISTERIAL AT 9TH-10TH, WHICH APPARENTLY IS SATISFACTORY FOR PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES OF OECD EXCEPT UK.

COMMENT: IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT BRITISH WILL ACCEPT 9TH-10TH DATES AND CALLAGHAN REVISE SCANDANAVIAN TRIP SCHEDULE UNLESS WASHINGTON OFFERS SUPPORT FOR REQUESTED CHANGE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OECDP03679
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760044-0506
From: OECD PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760279/aaaacric.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <27 MAY 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DATES FOR OECD MINISTERIAL
TAGS: ENRG, OECD, (CALLAGHAN, JAMES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006